

TED STEVENS, ALASKA, CHAIRMAN  
DANIEL K. INOUE, HAWAII, CO-CHAIRMAN

JOHN MCCAIN, ARIZONA  
CONRAD BURNS, MONTANA  
TRENT LOTT, MISSISSIPPI  
KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, TEXAS  
OLYMPIA J. SNOWE, MAINE  
DORRIS SMITH, OREGON  
JOHN ENSIGN, NEVADA  
GEORGE ALLEN, VIRGINIA  
JOHN E. SUNUNU, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
JIM DEMINT, SOUTH CAROLINA  
DAVID VITTER, LOUISIANA

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV, WEST VIRGINIA  
JOHN F. KERRY, MASSACHUSETTS  
BYRON L. DORGAN, NORTH DAKOTA  
BARBARA BOXER, CALIFORNIA  
BILL NELSON, FLORIDA  
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON  
FRANK LAUTENBERG, NEW JERSEY  
E. BENJAMIN NELSON, NEBRASKA  
MARK PRYOR, ARKANSAS

LISA J. SUTHERLAND, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET L. CUMMISKY, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,  
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

Web site: <http://commerce.senate.gov>

PHONE: (202) 224-6115

March 29, 2005

Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher  
Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Admiral Lautenbacher:


I am writing to share with you my strong support for the Makah Tribe in their hopes of carrying out a subsistence hunt of the Eastern North Pacific gray whale. As you know, the Makah Tribe has submitted a proposal to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) asking that the take moratorium of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) be waived for this purpose.

In 1885, the federal government promised the Makah that their ability to carry out such a hunt would be respected, by specifically securing their right to carry out whaling in the Treaty of Neah Bay. The Makah are unique in having such a treaty right.

The Makah's proposal reflects their long tradition of hunting whales for their subsistence. The proposal is thoughtful and environmentally responsible, and includes many conditions and safeguards for such a hunt, a reflection of the Makah's desire to implement their treaty rights while taking care to preserve the gray whale population. At the same time, the health of the gray whale population is a tremendous success story. Once on the endangered species list, the Eastern North Pacific gray whale was taken off the list in 1994 and the population now numbers over 20,000.

I hope you will support the Makah's pursuit of their treaty rights, and that you will look favorably on this proposal.

Aloha,



DANIEL K. INOUE  
Vice-Chairman

DKI:af